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The following letter from the new Expedition to Sardis by the Director, George M. A. Hanfmann, is, we hope, the first of a series of letters from a new project of the Schools. Two previous attempts were made to excavate the site; the first by H. C. Butler from 1910-1914 was interrupted by the First World War, while the second by T. L. Shear in 1921-22 was terminated by the Greco-Turkish War. The present expedition is sponsored by the American Schools in their effort to broaden their interests in the Near East and is supported by Cornell University, the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University, and the Bollingen Foundation. The site should interest all of you since it is important from the Lydian through the Hellenistic, Roman, Early Christian, Byzantine, and Ottoman periods.

A. Henry Detweiler, President

The Archaeological Exploration of Sardis, sponsored by the American Schools of Oriental Research in partnership with Cornell University and the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University, is now well along in its first campaign. Early in June Mrs. Ilse Hanfmann, Recorder, Mr. John Washeba, Conservator, Mr. Donald P. Hansen, Archaeologist, and I as Field Director, all of Harvard University, arrived in Izmir. With the vigorous help of our Turkish Commissioner, Bay Kemal Ziya Polatkan, we set up camp in the village school at Sart Mustafa. The location of our headquarters midst the green trees and under the shadow of a slender minaret is indeed picturesque, offering beautiful views of the bold crags of the Sardis Acropolis, of the nearly sheer red wall of the Necropolis Hill (so named after the many Lydian tombs found at its foot) and finally across to the gigantic mound of King Alyattes visible beyond the wide Hermus Plain.

To secure additional living quarters for the staff and sufficient working and storage space, we annexed and refurbished the "official room" (k8y odasi) of the village and a sizeable village house. Our renovation of the "official room" created such enthusiasm among the villagers that they contributed additional materials for the embellishment of the building, which henceforth received the nickname of "Kresus Palas".

During late June and early July frequent arrivals completed the roster of the staff. We were particularly happy to welcome to our ranks our Field Advisor, the President of the Schools, A. Henry Detweiler. Other members of the staff during the current campaign are Professor Thomas H. Canfield, Cornell University, Architect; Professor Marion Dean Ross, University of Oregon, Architect; Dean Sherman E. Johnson, Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Archaeologist and Epigrapher; Mrs. Catharine S. Detweiler, Numismatist; and Dr. Baki Ğün, Archaeologist of the University of Ankara, who was also assigned by the Department of Antiquities the function of Assistant

Commissioner. Mrs. Jean Johnson has been doing invaluable work, especially in the cataloguing and recording of glass and lamps. Finally, we have added to our staff as draftsman and general helper Güven Bakir, of the Manisa Museum.

Don Hansen came to us straight from the Oriental Institute excavations at Nippur; Sherman and Jean Johnson are veterans of El Jib; Dean Ross has done architectural field work for the National Park Service, while Baki Oğün has participated in the excavations of many Turkish sites.

Digging began on June 20th in the precinct of the Temple of Artemis, where we laid a trench south of the great Hellenistic marble temple excavated between 1910 and 1914 by the first Sardis Expedition under Howard Crosby Butler. Butler's account gave reason to believe that any Lydian levels lying hidden below the so-called "Hellenistic-Lydian" level excavated by Butler could be reached quickly and economically. Under the supervision of Don Hansen, the trench was taken to a depth of 4.60 m. and subsequently a pit dug to 6.90 m. Two Byzantine water pipes appeared first, which were part of a vast system of water collection and distribution at the time (7th to 9th centuries A.D.) when the Byzantines had converted the temple of Artemis into a large cistern. Curious layers of stones, pebbles, and ultimately hard pan which underlay the surface stratum, were eventually recognized as the bed of a torrent which flowed thru the southern part of the sanctuary at some time between the 9th and 5th centuries B.C. This approximate dating results from the numerous though small sherds, which the torrent had carried down from some Lydian structure located higher up on the Acropolis slope. The most interesting finds among these river-borne presents were a Lydian inscription incised on a potsherd (reading OLAM, incomplete) and a terra cotta die (dice). The latter evokes memories of the story of Herodotus, who maintained that the Lydians had invented all sorts of games to while away the foodless days during a famine. The sherds, which include some examples of local Protogeometric style, are a valuable collection of the little-known Lydian pottery. Archaeologically, our sounding indicates that there were certainly no archaic strata in this part of the Artemis precinct, and casts some doubt on Butler's assumption that a great temple of the time of Croesus stood in the same place where the colossal marble temple of Artemis stands now.

At the beginning of July we had to pause briefly to celebrate the Kurban Bayrami commemorating the sacrifice of Isaac. All through the moonlit night the drums were beating at the upper and lower village, and some of our younger members were induced by their local friends to join in the men's dancing at the small kahvehane.

Thereafter we began to develop our program of combining investigation of large buildings still visible above ground with soundings designed to test promising areas. The spectacular large structure known as Building "B" was briefly alluded to by Butler. It had been much admired by early travellers, who saw in it the palace of Croesus, but it has never been excavated or recorded. With its two long apsidal halls, its intricate system of pillars, niches, and arches, and its

central unit which may have had a dome, this complex presents a great challenge to the student of architectural history. Standing firm amidst clouds of dust which violent winds blow across this knoll, Tom Canfield has been conducting both a precise architectural survey and the digging, assisted by various members of the staff. With huge amounts of debris to be moved, we are hard at the work of clearing part of the southern facade and the long eastern flank. Already very fruitful developments have occurred. A most remarkable yet puzzling find was made in the dead center of the southern apse. On a shelf or podium which goes round the apse, there was found a large curving marble base, which, as its monumental inscription informs us, originally carried a statue of the emperor Lucius Verus (161-169 A.D.). The dedicant, Claudio Antonius Lepidus, known from another Sardian inscription, held the high office of a "Chief Priest of Asia". A truly tantalizing clause refers to a "polity around the gymnasium", but we shall not know for some time whether (as appears likely) the inscription was given this place of honor by a Byzantine architect or appears in its original position in a Roman gymnasium.

As far as objects are concerned, our most productive area developed when a row of rooms came to light directly south of the facade of the big building. These rooms used as their northern wall the south wall of the big building. Pottery, glass, nails, iron implements, and, above all, great numbers of coins, chiefly Byzantine, have come from all three levels that we have been able to distinguish so far. From the lowest, perhaps Early Byzantine (5th to 6th century A.D.) level, we retrieved the fragments of a small statue of Attis, which had been broken up and used as bedding for a floor.

Two walls of mighty limestone masonry, three to four courses high, formed an intriguing ruin. Noting briefly its existence, H.C. Butler had speculated that this might be the eastern city gate of Sardis, where the famous Royal Road of the Persians entered the city. Optimistically, we thought of it as a "limited objective" that might well be attained within the scope of one campaign. Now, a month later, and some six meters down into the ground, we know better. The grandiose structure was found to have a large arched main gate. Devoting himself single-mindedly to this task, Dean Ross has been freeing the eastern part of the building to which there is a western counterpart. Cascades of blocks weighing some two to three tons had fallen from the building at various times, and lacking appropriate machinery our workmen have been performing Herculean deeds with crowbars and levers to move these obstacles out of the excavation. That the big gate was flanked by several smaller arches was apparent, but only recently was one of them revealed to have been a half-dome so that it may have had a decorative role. The latest surprise came yesterday when another mighty arch began to emerge under the great arched gateway. While we can trace the history of the building via squatters' ash floors and a brick structure built into the gate, after the passage had been blocked up, we have yet a long way to go before we can appraise with certainty the original date and design. Certain it is that its austere grandeur evokes visions which rival Piranesi's fancies in his famous Carceri. Here is an objective to which, after acquisition of additional land, we shall devote a considerable effort in the future.

As our workmen get trained, they also become more interested. They pointed out a hole in the southern part of the Artemis sanctuary. Pursuing the matter, we found not only graves -- we had surmised the hole might lead into a chamber grave -- but also a wall linking up with a structure partly excavated by Butler and termed by him the "Lydian Building". As matters now stand, we have excavated the northern front of the building and are pursuing it southward. At the time of writing, it appears that the structure is composed of at least two sequences of large rooms running east-west. The date of the building, which had stuccoed and painted walls, might be either late Hellenistic or early Roman. Its builders had cut into a layer of brown earth and ashes, which by local pottery and by "glazed palmette Ware" of early kind can be shown to belong to either the fifth or the fourth century B.C. It is not quite certain yet what the earliest traces on this site might be, but at the bottom of a pit there we have encountered the same river bed as in the trench south of the temple. Directed by Baki Ogun, this excavation has been yielding considerable amounts of interesting pottery.

While a few fragments of sculpture and a half-dozen inscriptions have come to light in the excavations proper, our coming to Sart has focussed the flow of accidental finds. Sherman Johnson has combined with greatest efficiency the duties of an excavator, photographer, and epigrapher. His careful examination of the inscriptions now at Sardis lists a total of some 60 believed to be new, all but two in Greek. He has also ascertained that some 50 inscriptions published in Sardis VII:1 are still at Sart.

Of soundings done or in prospect, a stepped trench dug by Don Hansen on Kagarlik Tepe, northeast and above the Artemis Temple, revealed a cemetery of Roman and probably Early Christian times. Another sounding was started today in an area across the highway from Building B, where according to our calculations an important part of the ancient city was located.

What I can hardly convey in this letter is the tremendous number and variety of the ruins of ancient Sardis. Suffice it to say that a full circuit from our headquarters to the Artemis Precinct, to Kagarlik, to Building B, to the City Gate is a matter of at least three miles. In the early "heroic" days of the excavation this circuit was walked by the staff two, three, or even four times -- no joke in the glaring heat of the noon.

Our relations with the local authorities, such as the District Commissioner and other officials at Salihli and the many officers of the Province of Manisa, have been most cordial. Indeed, His Excellency, the Governor (Vali) of Manisa visited the excavation on the second day and several times since. Ferit Camoglu, Commissioner of Education, has let us use his office as headquarters during visits to Manisa. Acting on behalf of the Ministry of Education his department has joined forces with the expedition in the construction of the permanent excavation house and compound, which is now going up. Unfortunately we shall not be able to enjoy the new quarters this year, as the excavation house will be completed after our departure. We

hope, however, to be able to store some of our equipment in the basement, which should be completed in September.

The Americans at Izmir and also at the great dam project of Demirköprü have been much interested in our work, as have been the Turkish magazines and newspapers. (We may appear in the Turkish "Life" -- no relation to the American.) Mr. Donald B. Eddy, the American Consul, has shown the utmost kindness as well as exemplary efficiency in dealing with the various problems we have brought before him, and American officers of the NATO command have been most helpful to the expedition. It may be fairly said that the importance of our undertaking for cultural relations between Turkey and the United States is appreciated in many circles.

As we were readying our camp we were skillfully piloted through the proper channels of Turkish economic life by our Commissioner. Glass, sugar, tea, concrete, and at times gasoline are subject to special allocation permits, and the officials in charge were most ready to grant our requests. By careful combing of the teeming, still rather Oriental market of Izmir and of the prosperous, cotton-growing center of Salihli we found suitable substitutes for many American products and also learned a good deal about local tools and products. We have now a much clearer picture of the possibilities of supplying the expedition, and the operation is running smoothly. Scholarly and diplomatic visitors begin to arrive in increasing number. Among them have been Dr. William Morton, formerly Director of the American School in Jerusalem; Miss J. Voorys, now with the Boghaz Kale expedition; Ray Winfield Smith, Chairman of the Committee for the study of Ancient Glass; Mr. John Goodyear, Political Counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Mr. Necdet H. Kent, Director General of the Department of Consular Affairs and Claims of the Turkish Foreign Office and Mr. Friedrich von Rummel, German Cultural Attaché.

The season at Sardis will continue until September, but even now we feel certain that the results of the first, partly exploratory campaign justify the plan of a longterm large scale excavation of this crucial site.

George M. A. Hanfmann,
Field Director